

SUBJECT: Reducing paperwork and unfunded mandates for school districts

COMMITTEE: Government Reform — committee substitute recommended

VOTE: 6 ayes — Callegari, Pitts, Berman, Leibowitz, Miles, Rodriguez

0 nays

1 absent — W. Smith

WITNESSES: (*On original bill:*)

For — Sarah Winkler, Alief Independent School District and Texas Association of School Boards; (*Registered, but did not testify:* Ramiro Canales, Texas Association of School Administrators)

Against — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Portia Bosse, Texas State Teachers Association; Ted Melina Raab, Texas Federation of Teachers; Josh Sanderson, Association of Texas Professional Educators)

On — Carrie Kroll, Texas Medical Association, Texas Pediatric Society, Texas Academy of Family Physicians; (*Registered, but did not testify:* Jack Sims, Texas Department of State Health Services)

BACKGROUND: During the 2005 regular session, the 79th Legislature enacted SB 493 by Van de Putte, which added Education Code, sec. 7.060 requiring that the education commissioner at least once each even-numbered year review and reduce written reports and paperwork required of school districts by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). It also directs the commissioner to adopt a policy to limit reports and other paperwork that a principal or classroom teacher may be required by TEA to complete.

Education Code, sec. 28.004 requires a school district to establish a local school health advisory council to make recommendations on changes to the district's health education curriculum.

In the 2005 regular session, the 79th Legislature enacted HB 914 by Woolley to require local governments to disclose information about contracts and possible conflict of interests by members of the governing body. HB 914 also added Local Government Code, sec. 176.009 that

requires information on contracts be posted on the local entity's Internet website.

In 2001, the 77th Legislature enacted SB 31 by Zaffirini, which added Education Code, sec. 38.0025 requiring TEA to prescribe procedures so that school districts provide information about bacterial meningitis to its students and their parents each school year.

DIGEST:

CSHB 3297 would amend Education Code, sec. 7.060 to require the commissioner of education to adopt policies that would reduce the amount of written paperwork provided by local school districts by 10 percent compared with the 2006-07 school year. The paperwork reduction policies would have to be implemented by the 2008-09 school year. This section would expire on September 1, 2009.

The bill also would amend Education Code, sec. 28.004 to make the decision on whether school districts appoint a local school health advisory council permissive, rather than mandatory. It would allow the continuation of existing councils.

CSHB 3297 would amend Local Government Code, sec. 176.009 (a) to delete the requirement that school districts post information about their contracts on their Internet website.

CSHB 3297 also would repeal Education Code, sec. 38.0025, which requires school districts to provide information about bacterial meningitis to the parents of students each school year.

The bill would take effect on September 1, 2007.

NOTES:

The original bill would have repealed requirements that school districts transfer students' immunization records to other school districts and report student immunizations to the state.

The original bill also would have also changed the method of calculating the school district's contribution to the Teacher Retirement System (TRS) for pay in excess of the state's minimum salary. That provision would have resulted in savings of \$195 million in fiscal 2008 and \$215 million in fiscal 2009 for local school districts, while it would have increased the state's contribution to TRS by like amounts.

